

# **EARLY INTERVENTION NEWSLETTER**

## **A Bi-monthly information sheet for EI service coordinators**

The purpose of this information sheet is to address general topics that may be of interest in the performance of your job as a service coordinator

### **PROVIDER COMFORT LEVEL/SAFETY CONCERNS**

So – you get the call, “I’m not really comfortable going into the family’s home because . . . .”

What do you do as a service coordinator?

Obviously you want to get more information and you need to triage the information that you get.

The first thing is to determine if the child or provider is at risk for imminent harm. If that is the case –advise the provider to contact either 911 or CPS dependent on the situation and you need to inform your EIOD. OTHER than that – there is time for discussion!

Become familiar with the regulations and guidance policies that have already been put out both in the service coordinator and provider manuals. Both the Health and Safety Standards and the Regulations offer guidance on the issue of safety and environmental concerns. In the service coordination manual – there is a “Safety” section (twds the back of the manual) that addresses safety concerns. In the provider manual it is chapter 7.

For example: Section IV of the Health and Safety Guidelines is entitled, “Standards for EI services delivered in the Home”. It specifically offers guidance on what situations you call the child abuse hotline, what to do if the home environment is unsafe i.e., chipping paint, exposed electrical wires, and what to do if there is secondhand smoke in the environment.

Here are some recent concerns that have been brought to my attention:

- 1) A provider goes to a family’s home where there has been a volatile split between the child’s parents and the father who has been out of the picture is in the home for the session. The provider is not sure if the father should be there or not.
- 2) A provider goes into the home and smells the strong odor of marijuana.
- 3) Similar to the above, a provider goes into the home and sees a lot of activity of people coming into and out of the home for short

periods and some apparent transactions occurring in the front yard.

- 4) The provider goes into the home and the caretaker appears to be drunk or under the influence.
- 5) A provider is in the home, hears loud yelling on the front porch, sees the mom come into the kitchen, take out a knife and then goes back outside.
- 6) A provider is in the home and during the session, the parents make negative comments about other team providers and how they provide services.
- 7) Parents call a provider on her cell phone and leave inappropriate messages.
- 8) The home environment is always filled with smoke/and or the provider has allergies to pets.

WHAT should you do as a service coordinator?

Always encourage the provider to consult with their supervisor.

COMMUNICATE – get more information, assess factors such as provider's experience level, personality. Help the provider differentiate if it is an issue of standards i.e., very messy home vs an issue of safety, or the use of profanity as everyday vernacular vs. volatile expressions of anger/insults. Encourage provider to discuss issues with the families.

You can always offer to support the provider by going out with them, offering a team meeting, bringing in the EIOD, suggesting that the provider's supervisor come out to a session, etc.

Explore the options of alternative settings with the providers and family – Although I know that many times this is not possible due to transportation limitations of the family. However, now that it is nicer weather – what about the front yard, walking to the playground, library, school yard, etc.

Discuss families putting away pets in another area, or refraining from smoking when therapists are in the home, provide information re: smoking cessation programs. There is a letter that Dr. Doniger wrote that is available to hand out to families. It is in the "H" drive for county staff and available to OSC's in your Procedures Common Manual – Tab 41A.

Empower the providers – they never have to work in an environment that they feel is dangerous, they always have the right to leave a session, to reschedule with a family. They also should be discussing expectations with families as to behavior and safety during their first few initial visits.

If a provider absolutely believes that they can no longer work with a family that is their choice. We cannot “force” a provider to work with a specific family. Regarding this situation, there has been recent clarification from the state on how much notice a provider must give if they feel they can not work with a family any longer. It is 30 days notice to the OSC and the EIOD, there is no specific guidance on the amount of notice they need to give to families, only to follow the guidance of their practice standards.

As a service coordinator you are the “Go To” person for the providers and the families. Helping the families and providers work together in addressing uncomfortable topics as they arise provides an opportunity to better the life of the child and the family.

***THE CHANGE CORNER - a quick list of recent changes: (since the last newsletter)***

- *For a comprehensive list see the list handed out at the last OSC quarterly*
- *DEV PEDS Policy - **New** Letter informing parents that Early Intervention does not cover any recommended medical tests as a result of the visit*
- ***New** Dr's ltr re: the referral to EI and results of core/and any services.*
- *New Insurance Form adding in third consent re: informing of health insurance changes and that EI services could be applied against insurance limits.*
- *OSC Documentation modified, new TASK added for OSC's - due to NYEIS requirements, you must contact Leisa Sabernick whenever the parent will be providing transportation or will be receiving respite services. **She prefers email or fax.***
- *NYEIS changes - Many of them!!!*

Editor's Note: Any comments, feedback, suggested topics strongly welcomed. You can reach me at [CMizerny@monroecounty.gov](mailto:CMizerny@monroecounty.gov) or phone # 753-5265.